

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STARK VOTES AGAINST 'SHAMEFUL' ENERGY BILL

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA, 13th) entered the following statement into the record in opposition to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 conference report. The report passed the house, 275-156. Stark's statement follows:

"Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 conference report. If U.S. energy policy were the Titanic, Republicans would give a tax credit for bailing water rather than changing navigation techniques to avoid a future crisis. Fossil fuels are increasingly expensive, polluting, contribute to war and global unrest, and will run out within the next 50-100 years, and yet President Bush and Republicans in Congress want to ride the sinking ship of oil dependence to its disastrous conclusion.

"This compromise between the House and Senate Republicans shows the good, the bad, and the ugly of politics.

"Good: After four years getting nowhere with drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and exempting manufacturers of MTBE from legal liability for groundwater contamination, the Republicans have finally relented and removed these provisions from the conference report.

"Bad: Now that everyone isn't focused on these high-profile issues, there's a sinking realization that this bill does nothing to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and will actually raise, not lower, the price of gasoline, because it triples the use of ethanol. Ethanol is a Midwestern farm subsidy, pure and simple. It's expensive, it emits some air pollutants more than gasoline, and up to six times more energy is used to make ethanol than the finished fuel contains.

"Ugly: The bill exempts oil and gas companies from the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act. To speed up oil production, oil companies can now inject fluids laced with toxic chemicals into oil and gas wells that penetrate groundwater. According to the bill, the EPA no longer has any ability to regulate these activities or force oil companies to prevent contamination of drinking water supplies.

"If you asked the American people how to create a secure energy future, they'd talk about

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solar and wind power, placing higher emission standards on SUVs, and conservation, but the great minds in the Republican Party don't believe in these proven strategies any more than they believe in the science of global warming.

"Since I know that Republicans don't like high gas prices, smog, asthma, or ruined wilderness any more than I do, I can only conclude that they are selling out the American people for their corporate contributors. I will have no part of it and I vote No on this shameful bill."